

Outline of A History of Lake Macbride State Park from Conception to 1969

- I. Conservation of soil, surface waters and woodlands
 - A. Dr. Thomas Macbride – pioneer conservation movement in Iowa, President of U of I
 - B. "Ding" Darling – nationally known political cartoonist and conservationist
 - C. Jacob Crane, Jr. – landscape architect
 - D. IC & CR Chambers of Commerce
 - E. F.W. Kent – photographer
- II. March 1931 – Statewide conservation plan – one of first twelve recommended for conversion into State Park
- III. 1932 – recommend construction of lake along Mill Creek
 - A. Prof. Floyd Lazelle – U of I journalism – nature study and identification (Page 4 of list of native trees & wildlife)
 - B. A. Welt & Marjorie Anderson – IC – kept complete file of all news from August 21, 1933 through 1969 and beyond
- IV. "Sugar Bottom" – large growth of native hard and soft maple. Pioneer days, much cut and converted to charcoal in processing smoked meats
- V. 1933 – 100,000 residents within 20 miles from Big Grove township
- VI. Bridge would permit both cars and pedestrians to cross to the West Side of the north arm – easy access – appearance of rough masonry, rustic
- VII. Mill Creek State Park
 - A. Options by A. A. Welt avg. price \$45/acre

Total cost entire development	\$90,000
800 acres land	\$32,000
Sewers, water, roads	\$ 8,000
 - B. Local financing was through sale of 132 cottage sites – money used to pay for land for entire park
 - C. \$50,000 Federal emergency funds for construction dam
 - D. When the lake was completed the entire park was deeded to the State without cost
 - E. Labor furnished by Civilian Conservation Corps. 100 young men – Lt. W. Merriam Lt. F. L. Turner – Construction Supt. F. S. Yetter 131,000 man-hours of work

- VIII. Dam at Junction of Mill and Jordan Creeks
 - A. Dedication ceremonies
 - B. Memorial Day 1934 – Memorial Day still marks open of summer season
 - C. Timber tent-like structures to spawn fish – 275 fish shelters
Earl Fiala, Supt of entire project degree civil engineering and law
114,368 miles on equipment
 - D. Federal est. of value \$3/day/man CCC labor = \$50,000 worth of work
 - E. “Macbride” name selected by contest
- IX. May 30, 1934 – dedication ceremony
 - A. Gov. Clyde Herring - “wanted to add the endorsement of the state”
 - B. Pres. Elect. Gilmore, U of I – “a place to get away from the world into a quiet retreat where it is possible to live with nature, the greatest teacher of all” “The park is more than a playground.” “It is a place where we conserve the spiritual values which make civilization.” “The people will have to realize that this is their property and keep it clean and wholesome as it was originally.”
 - C. Harry McGuire, editor “Outdoor Life” guest speaker called Macbride “a landmark in the history of recreation building in America.” “25 year plan will go down in history as the most important plan of its kind ever formulated in America.” “ You have faced the facts and given back an answer.” “Your leaders saw the part.” “They saw the wildlife paradise that my own grandparents knew in Iowa decimated, timber depleted year after year, cover for birds burned off, wild fowl marshes drained, streams and lakes polluted and rendered death-dealing alike to fish and human life; in short, they saw we had squandered nature to the danger point.” “He advised to support Ding Darling’s fight to make the country one of natural beauty and productiveness instead of “insane waste and extravagance”
- X. Rapidly became popular place for recreation
 - A. April 1936, water was permanently impounded
 - B. Final inspection C. H. Wilson, federal engineer in charge coordinating all groups working in the park CCC, WPA & National Park Service
 - C. Open to public June 15, 1937
- XI. 1940’s plans for flood control reservoir on Iowa River

- A. Original plan would have flood pool inundate Lake Macbride
- B. Fred J. Poyneer of CR, member State conservation Commission advocate – original plan for recreation and conservation
- C. Revised plan to raise dam 26 feet
- D. Increase lake area to 960 acres, additional land.
- E. Federal government paid and dedicated to State as park
- F. Lake level to 712 feet
- G. Work completed on new dam March 1, 1957
- H. Clearing brush and trees along new shoreline continued
- I. Roy Reed, Supt.
- J. Corps purchased all private land below 717 feet
- K. New entrance road from Solon
- L. Relocate bathhouse
- M. New 3BR 2 bath custodian house
- N. North Liberty road relocated
- O. Construction continued through to Dec. 1957 – await rains and heavy snow
- P. Lewis Boers, park conservation officer + 13 Anamosa inmates – tent sites and wood
- Q. Jan. 13, 1960 water began cascading over spillway.
- R. Almost 1000 acres of boating and fishing
- S. 47 feet deep at dam, 29 feet deeper than original lake
- T. No motors initially. 1969 was 6-hp limit in place
- U. Sailing more accessible
- V. Commercial boat concession
- W. Fish management building 1963

- X. 1967 shore rip rap and fishing jetties
- Y. 1969 900,000 visitors, 35,000 campers, 33 states, 6 countries
- Z. 2,500 swimmers per day at beach
- AA. Handicapped accessibility
- BB. University sponsored groups in buses
- CC. Church services at water's edge
- DD. Winter activities – fish jamborees, snowmobiles, ice boats, skaters,
cross country skiing